

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4940

INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

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KUWAIT PASS USINT BAGHDAD

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, IR, IZ

SUB: EARLY PARLIAMENTARY APPROVAL OF IRAN-IRAQ AGREEMENTS NOT
EXPECTED

REF: (A) TEHRN 11639, (B) BAGHDAD 1312

1. MFA IRAQI AFFAIRS CHIEF REZA GHASSEMI, MEMBER OF DELEGATION
WHICH COMPLETED WORK IN BAGHDAD ON SIX AGREEMENTS SIGNED THERE
DECEMBER 26 BY FONMINS, DOES NOT EXPECT EARLY APPROVAL BY IRANIAN
PARLIAMENT. HE NOTED THAT JUNE 13 TREATY (REFTEL A) HAS NOT
YET BEEN APPROVED AND NOW WILL BE CONSIDERED BY PARLIAMENT ALONG WITH
LATEST SET OF AGREEMENTS. GHASSEMI THOUGHT APPROVAL MIGHT NOT COME
UNTIL CLOSE TO JUNE 13, 1976 DEADLINE AGREED TO IN TREATY LAST
YEAR (PARA ONE, REFTEL A).

2. AGREEMENTS JUST SIGNED IN BAGHDAD CONCERNED (1) WATER BOUNDARY,
(2) LAND FRONTIER, (3) GRAZING RIGHTS OF LIVESTOCK, (4) NAVIGATION
OF SHATT AL-ARAB, (5) DUTIES OF JOINT FRONTIER COMMISSIONS, AND
(6) BEGINNING OF TWO-WAY PILGRIMAGE TRAVEL MARCH 15. GHASSEMI SAID
NO SUBSTANTIAL DISAGREEMENTS OCCURRED, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE MANY
MINOR HASSLES OVER WORDING. MARCH 15 DATE FOR PILGRIMAGE TRAVEL IS
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LATER THAN FORECAST IN REFTEL A, A DELAY WHICH GHASSEMI ASCRIBED

TO IRAQI ADMINISTRATIVE DELAYS IN PROVIDING FACILITIES FOR EXPECTED
LARGE INFLUX OF IRANIAN PILGRIMS. BECAUSE OF EXPECTED HEAVY TRAF-
FIC, GHASSEMI HAS ARGUED IN VAIN AGAINST ADVANCE PUBLICITY ON
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS ON GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO WAIT
UNTIL EVERYTHING IS SET RATHER THAN TO RAISE EXPECTATIONS PRE-
MATURELY. EXAMPLE OF INACCURATE PRESS REPORTING WAS STORY PUBLISHED
DECEMBER 27 ABOUT GROUP FROM RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS ORGANIZATION
WHICH WAS TO LEAVE SHORTLY FOR IRAQ TO MAKE DETAILED TRAVEL ARRANGE-
MENTS. GHASSEMI SAID STORY WAS MERELY REPORTER'S IMAGINATION AT
WORK. DESPITE EXPECTED LACK OF PARLIAMENTARY APPROVAL BY MARCH
15, GHASSEMI EXPECTS PILGRIMAGE TRAVEL TO BEGIN BY THEN.
COMMENT: THAT TIMING WOULD MESH WELL WITH IRANIAN NEW YEAR VACA-
TION WHICH BEGINS MARCH 21 AND IS TRADITIONAL TIME FOR TRAVEL.
HELMS

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